

Hallowell Conservation Commission – Monday, March 20, 2023 Minutes
Hallowell Fire Station, Coos Lane, 6:30pm -- In Person.

March Minutes

In attendance: Rosemary, Karen, Hilary, Malena, Jean

Updates:

- We received our HCC banner
- This Friday 3/24 at 9:30am there is a call with DEP to review Vaughan Stream water monitoring data from last year; HCC and stream volunteers invited.
- Last month's minutes approved (Feb)
- HCC will review Open Space ordinance proposed updates in April; plan review with Rec Comm in May

Discussion of what to include on the Sustainable Hallowell website:

- Overview of what HCC does, and info about current projects:
 - Water quality data summary
 - Invasive species information
 - Conservation best practices for residents (streams, yards, fields, woods, etc.)
- Overview of all involved groups and their projects, how to get involved/volunteer
- Reminder: get brochure from Rosemary about what HCC is doing
- Info about drinking water quality (Hallowell water district?)
 - Tying environmental water quality with public health water quality (all the same from public POV)
 - Provide information about PFAS
- Public lands — availability of outdoor recreational spaces (public + private)
- Links to maps (critical resource areas)
- Resources/where to find answers
- Link to GG&HH website

Grow Green & Healthy Hallowell updates:

- Council public hearing last week: 7 opposed (4 residents, 3 lawn care companies), 10 supporters (including reps from MOFGA, Beyond Pesticides, and Karen Snyder from Portland)
- Sentiment is that they want to give it a break to let it settle in people's minds
- There is room for some compromise — council will hopefully review closely and figure out what's important and what's less important to them; GGHH plans for review of LMO and recommend updates based on public meetings to Council prior 2nd reading.
- Opportunities for community education
 - Upcoming HCC workshop with Deb Perkins
 - Wisdom Landscaping proposal to do a demonstration about sustainability landscaping in late May
 - Will continue presence at Farmer's Market this year
- The Granite Hill Estates sustainability committee is interested in doing their whole property with sustainable management; their first step are test sites there
- Selling the "pesticide free zone" signs at the farmers market?

HCA Updates:

- Meeting next week
- Efficiency Maine residential program presentation coming up on Wed April 12 at city hall auditorium 6:30-8pm

- Exploring doing a Window Dressers community build — participatory model, low cost, provides some for low-income folks
- Upcoming energy efficiency grants — focus is on upgrading city hall, need to do energy audit for municipality; weatherize; heat pump for the auditorium level
- Public EV chargers will be delivered in late April

Upcoming Earth Day, April 22:

- 3rd annual litter patrol, if folks are available, please come, 9-11am
- There will also be a pollinator garden cleanup
- Tree Board might also start knotweed cleanup
- Dance collective from the River Studio taking place in Augusta-Hallowell-Gardiner (Hallowell portion will be around 11am)
- Groups can bring a table — HCA, GG&HH
- A local business wants to sponsor GCP clean-ups for HCC this year; Rosemary in discussion on next steps

Watch Item updates:

- City (Public Works proposed location) is going to close on Pinnacle Dr lot by the end of March
- No updates on RES and National Guard property — still in discussion with Rep Shagoury, City Mgr, and Guard.
- Rosemary will check with city council on how they would like to receive feedback on Comp Plan tasks – thanks to all HCC members for their reviews and comments.

Updates from other groups:

- Recreation Commission
 - First meeting was basic organization, they're just getting started
 - Putting off discussion of Open Space zoning until May
- Tree Board
 - Today submitted a Project Canopy application for Granite City Park; HCC did support letter by March 10. Some cedars, some shrubs, etc. plus and education component.

Adjourn – 2023 Meeting Reminders – Apr 24, May 15, Jun 12

**Respectively submitted,
Malena Gatti**